

Agenda Item: I.A.3.**DATE:** January 27, 2005**SUBJECT:** Masters of Fine Arts in Recording Arts and Technology at Middle Tennessee State University**ACTION RECOMMENDED:** Approval

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The overall purpose of the proposed M.F.A. program is to prepare practitioners in the field of audio and music recording and production for advanced work in an integrated electronic media environment. The program is designed to meet the expressed needs of the entertainment industry and higher education professionals in the State of Tennessee and the nation. Advanced study in a program including components in audio, with strong cognates in electronic visual communication, music, and/or computer science is requisite for individuals seeking advanced career placement and career longevity in the growing integrated media environment.

PROPOSED START-UP DATE: Upon approval

Commission staff has reviewed program proposals according to the academic standards adopted by the Commission on November 14, 2002. Each standard is referenced below.

1.1.20A MISSION: The proposed program is consistent with the university mission of offering an extensive range of programs that primarily serve students of Middle Tennessee, while attracting students nationally and internationally. MTSU has an increasing emphasis on scholarship and a commitment to research and public service activities which expand knowledge and enhance the quality of life.

1.1.20B CURRICULUM: The proposed curriculum requires completion of 60 semester credit hours distributed as follows:

<u>Courses</u>	<u>Hours Required</u>
General Education	NA
Major Field Core	39
Guided Electives	12
Cognate Area*	<u>9</u>
TOTAL:	60

*The cognate area will allow students to explore related fields relevant to the audio content development and its role in various media contests. To accommodate the proposed graduate program, the following sixteen (16) new courses were developed:

<u>New Courses:</u>	<u>Credit Hours</u>
Visual Aesthetics & Technology I	3
Visual Aesthetics & Technology II	3
Recording in Cultural Context	3
Multi-track Recording	3
Production Seminar I	3
Disk-Based Audio Post-Production	3
Production Seminar II	3
Graduate Seminar in Audio Recording	3
Legal Rights of the Creative Individual	3
Composition for Contemporary Media	3
Introduction to Film Scoring	3
Production Seminar III	3
Directed Research	3
Directed Production	3
Graduate Internship	1-3
Final Project	1-9

1.1.20C ACADEMIC STANDARDS: Admission, retention and graduation requirements for the proposed degree program are the same as the standard university requirements and are specified in the in Graduate Catalog.

Additional admission requirements are based on any combination of the nature of their undergraduate degree, related professional experience, and strength of a submitted portfolio of related creative work. These admission requirements include a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 on all courses attempted, a portfolio of works representative of the candidate's creative achievements in the areas of audio recording, composition, video, film, multimedia, web-design, or areas strongly related to the degree curriculum, and two favorable letters of recommendation by the student's undergraduate major advisor and/or other professionals familiar with the student's academic and creative qualifications. The cumulative minimum GPA of 3.0 must be maintained for graduate courses.

Projected Program Productivity		
Year	FTE	Graduates
1	10	0
2	19	0
3	28	5
4	34	7
5	44	10

1.1.20D FACULTY: The current faculty in the Department of Recording Industry has twenty full-time faculty members with a broad range of experience in the music industry. No additional faculty will be required to implement the proposed program.

1.1.20E LIBRARY RESOURCES: Additional library resources to support the proposed program have been addressed through the campus library resource allocation plan.

1.1.20F ADMINISTRATION/ORGANIZATION: The proposed program will be housed in the Department of Recording Industry, coordinated by a faculty member with administrative release.

1.1.20G SUPPORT RESOURCES: The Center for Popular Music at MTSU will be a valuable resource to support the proposed program and students. External affiliations exist with various agencies through the Department of Recording Industry internship program.

1.1.20H FACILITIES/INSTRUCTIONAL EQUIPMENT: Renovations to add two new audio production facilities have been completed; therefore, no additional space will be required. Additional instructional equipment will be acquired through the Technical Access Fee and external resources.

1.1.20I STUDENT/EMPLOYER DEMAND: MTSU houses one of the nation's largest, most comprehensive, and best equipped program in audio recording and music business. With over 1400 majors, it is one of the largest departments at the university. The proposed M.F.A. will complement the production and technology sequence in the department by the infusion of high caliber graduate students as teaching assistants and research assistants. Student demand for graduate education in recording arts is strong both inside and outside the institution. MTSU receives in excess of 100 inquiries about graduate education in this area annually. More than 75 percent of current students in advanced recording and digital animation classes at MTSU indicated an interest in graduate studies. Music, film, TV, commercial and music video production generated more than \$4 billion for Tennessee's economy in 1998. Tennessee has long been a world capital for music production and publishing in many genres. With the recent relocation of classical recording and distribution giant NAXOS of American to Franklin, Tennessee's impact on world-wide music production is even greater. Approximately 100 professional audio, video and film production firms were surveyed to determine core skills and competencies needed by the industry. This information provided the basis for the proposed M.F.A. curriculum. Over 70 institutions of higher education offer programs or instruction in music recording. Although this is a narrow market for those institutions seeking faculty members with terminal qualifications to teach recording courses, the M.F.A. also would serve as a means of obtaining highly qualified faculty.

1.1.20J NO UNNECESSARY DUPLICATION: Recording Arts is unique to MTSU and there are no similar programs offered by any public or private institution in the State of Tennessee.

1.1.20K COOPERATIVE INSTITUTIONS: None indicated.

1.1.20L DESEGREGATION: MTSU conducted a desegregation impact study and established measures that will be taken to enhance racial diversity of the institution.

Upon review, the data found that the proposed program will have no negative impact on desegregation efforts of other institutions in Middle Tennessee and will not infringe on or diminish the educational mission of any other institution. The program will not impede the state's effort to achieve racial diversity.

1.1.20M ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION: There is no professional accreditation in this area. The program will be administered with a regular five-year academic review and will be within the compliance and guidelines for SACS.

1.1.20N ARTICULATION: N/A

1.1.20O EXTERNAL JUDGMENT (Graduate Programs): Dr. Roy Pritts, Professor of Recording Arts and Media at the University of Colorado, Denver, served as the external consultant to visit the campus and review the proposal based on THEC and TBR criteria. According to Dr. Pritts, the proposal identified a foundation of common knowledge and skills that all graduates must share to gain a functional proficiency in the history, hardware, techniques and vocabulary to enhance career placement and advancement opportunities in recording arts. He further stated that the proposed program provides students with elective options to develop areas of emphasis and considered the curriculum design to be consistent with industry expectations.

Dr. Pritts described the faculty of the College of Communications, and particularly the recording Industry program, as diverse and highly qualified. "They have an impressive combination of formal study and professional experience and are appropriately engaged in the professional organizations and scientific societies in their fields." Dr. Pritts indicated that as a stable and expanding industry, with specific geographic advantages available to the university, MTSU is ready to implement the proposed program.

1.1.20P COST/BENEFIT/SOURCE: The Middle Tennessee region, Nashville in particular, is recognized to be one of the major centers of music production and does not have other institutions in the area that provide training to meet the workforce demands of the profession. This industry is not likely to leave the Nashville area, as would some other type of industries. The proposed program is predicted to grow and provide lucrative job opportunities for graduates of film, television, commercial and music video production and elsewhere in the nation. Estimated costs and revenues are as follows:

Recurring Expenditures:	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Administration	\$ 8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000
Faculty	-0-	47,546	96,994	148,401	151,370
Staff	9,282	9,468	9,657	9,850	10,047
Benefits	2,599	15,962	29,862	44,310	45,196
Equipment					
Library	500	750	1,000	1,000	1,000
Graduate Assts.	24,000	50,400	79,386	84,355	88,573
Recruitment	500	250	250	250	250

TOTAL:	44,881	132,376	225,149	296,166	304,436
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Projected Revenues:

Tuition/Fees	\$87,488	\$164,032	\$240,576	\$289,776	\$371,776
Institutional					
Resources*	<u>11,881</u>	<u>12,119</u>	<u>12,316</u>	<u>12,608</u>	<u>12,860</u>
TOTAL:	\$99,369	\$176,151	\$252,937	\$302,384	\$384,636

*Current staff position that will support the M.F.A.

1.1.30 POST APPROVAL MONITORING: An annual performance review of the proposed program will be conducted for the first five years following approval. The review will be based on goals established in the approved program proposal. At the end of this period, campus, governing board and Commission staff will perform a summative evaluation. These goals include, but are not limited to enrollment and graduation numbers, program costs, progress toward accreditation, library acquisitions, student performance and other goals set by the institution and agreed upon by governing board and Commission staff. As a result of this evaluation, if the program is found to be deficient, the Commission may recommend that the governing board terminate the program. Copies of such recommendation will be forwarded to the Education Committees of the General Assembly. The Commission may also choose to extend this period if additional time is needed and requested by the governing board.